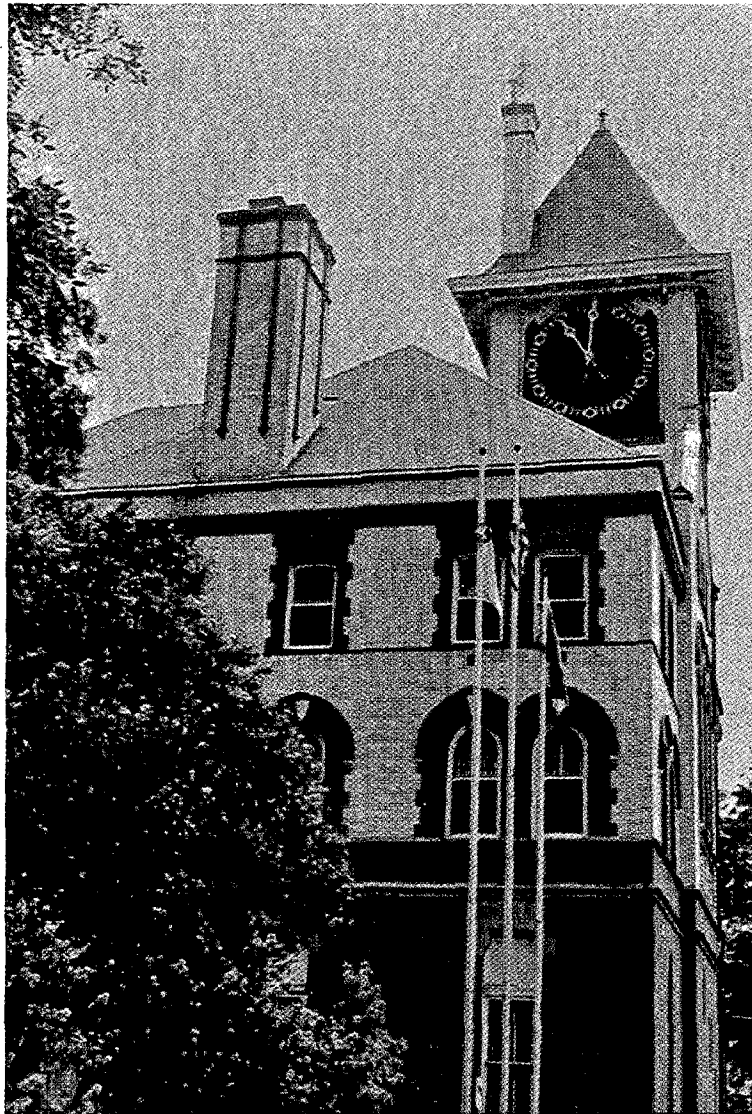


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# CITY OF NEW BERN RECREATION PLAN



**NEW BERN**  
**NORTH CAROLINA**

North Carolina. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development

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July 1978

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION

### NEED FOR A RECREATION SYSTEM

Communities throughout the nation are realizing that the complexities of modern living have made recreation an essential part of everyday life. The contemporary urban citizen has more leisure time to devote to his recreational interests. Today, the forty-hour workweek and the two-week vacation are considered normal for most of the labor force, and indications point to shorter workweeks and longer vacations during the years ahead. Consequently, the need for increasing recreation opportunities has been well established. In terms of land needs throughout the nation, municipal park and recreation land may need to be increased as much as eight times the present acreage by the year 2000. Obviously, New Bern cannot afford to ignore the increasing recreation needs of its citizens.

A century ago, any suggestion that the people of New Bern should tax themselves in order to provide outdoor recreation areas would have been considered ridiculous. The rural atmosphere prevailing at that time when rivers and streams were unpolluted, yard areas were spacious, and the city was surrounded by open space and forest, did not require the provision of space for recreational purposes. The goal was to wrest land from the wilderness and convert it to urban use.

During recent years, the new forces of urban living have radically changed our philosophy with respect to conserving open lands for public recreation. Some of these forces include the following:

- 1) The uncontrolled sprawl of urban areas and the increasing number of urban residents resulting in the reduction of outdoor recreation opportunities amid natural surroundings near residential areas.
- 2) The need for energy conservation which has restricted our totally mobile society and made long distance travel for recreation less desirable.

3) The increasing number of children and older people seeking ways to occupy leisure time.

4) The increasing popularity of all forms of recreational activities.

These aforementioned forces will continue during the years ahead. More people will be living in compact urban areas, and the trend toward more leisure time will continue. Energy conservation will play an increasingly important role, and there will be a larger proportion of children and older people than there is today. These forces dictate the necessity of providing more and more recreational opportunities as close to potential users as possible. This can only be accomplished through the establishment of adequate areas within each neighborhood, as well as larger community and regional facilities. The continuing growth and scattered development of New Bern and its environs intensify this need and simultaneously make recreation areas more difficult to obtain.

#### Population

The 1970 U.S. Census indicated that the City of New Bern had a population of 14,660, although this figure has been challenged by the City. Based on past trends, the Commerce Department projected a 1975 population of 17,246 for New Bern. This is a 17.6% increase over the 1970 census. The city's future population is not as important for planning purposes as the future planning area or urban area population. Based upon calculations derived from a land use survey, the New Bern urban planning area contains a population of approximately 4,500 for a total of 21,750 persons. This estimate should form the basis for the 1990 recreation plans. The chief problem with recreation in New Bern will not be, as in many cities, a problem of struggling to keep recreational facilities up with the population growth surge. Instead, it will be one of bringing existing and proposed areas up to high recreation standards.

For recreational purposes, the age distribution of the population and the expected age group shifts in the future are vitally important. The proper expansion and development of the city's existing and proposed facilities will ensure that the total city population receives adequate recreational opportunities. Some of the major factors to be obtained from the population characteristics of New Bern for recreational planning are as follows:

- 1) The 1970 population of the 0 - 15 years age group was 4,157. This age group is expected to increase in size during the next 10 years. Consequently, a great deal of emphasis should be placed on the recreation facilities for this age group.
- 2) The people from 15 to 64 years of age have a common desire for active recreational opportunities which require a great amount of land and facilities. This composite age grouping composes 62.2 per cent of New Bern's present population. This group is expected to increase in population size during the next 10 years. A great deal of attention should be given to recreational needs of this group, particularly in view of the increasing participation from this age category in recreation. It should be noted that the 15-29 age group is expected to increase only slightly in population size during the 1980-1990 period.
- 3) The 60 and over age group is expected to have a large population increase during the next 10 years. As a result, an increased emphasis should be placed on activities for the elderly. Usually recreational opportunities can be offered to this age group with a minimum effort because of the passive nature of the elderly's recreation needs. In too many instances, the recreation needs of the elderly are overlooked.



## Economy

The economy of an urban area might not seem to offer any insight into recreation needs at first glance. However, the economic well-being and the composition of the labor force in the urban area does help to evaluate recreation needs, particularly for public recreation. In 1969, New Bern had a median family income of \$7,338, while Urban North Carolina as a whole had a median family income of \$8,588. Obviously, a New Bern resident would be in greater need of public recreation than would the "average" Urban North Carolina resident due to the difference in income levels.

During recent years, New Bern has become increasingly aware of the benefits to be gained from the tourist business. Tryon Palace has been a tremendous tourist attraction to both in-state and out-of-state visitors. Likewise, the city has many historical homes and points of interest located around the Central Business District which attract a large number of tourists. The regional recreation opportunities which New Bern offers will be reflected indirectly in the city's economy via tourist business. If there is any doubt regarding the economic value of tourism, one should note that tourists in the United States spend somewhere between 30 and 40 billion dollars annually. Most people take vacation trips simply to sightsee and thus places of scenic interest are the most visited. According to a recent study, historic places rank second in interest, and places of educational interest rank third in attracting visitors. North Carolina is well endowed with a variety of vacation and travel attractions.

In 1972 an estimated forty-five million out-of-state people visited North Carolina. Travel expenditures by these tourists were nearly \$600 million in 1972, more than double the \$245 million expenditures in 1960. Out-of-state travel expenditures are projected to reach \$730 million during 1975 and over \$1 billion by 1980. During a two-day stay in North Carolina, the average tourist party of two spends \$5.50 at inns and lodging places, \$7.50 in cafes and

for food services, \$5.00 at gas stations and garages, \$2.75 at tourist attractions, \$3.75 in retail stores, and \$2.50 for miscellaneous items, totalling \$27.00.

In-state tourists spent an estimated \$328 million in 1972, an increase of more than \$165 million since 1970. Annual in-state tourist expenditures are projected to reach \$380 million in 1975.

All sections of North Carolina share in the travel industry. Although the Mountains and the Coastal Plain each receive more vacation travelers than the Piedmont, the Piedmont does experience the bulk of through traffic and has more inns, convention facilities, and auto services. Increases in travel expenditures have approximately doubled in the ten leading North Carolina counties between 1964 and 1972.

Much of North Carolina's tourist trade derives from the mobile tourist market flowing along the middle Atlantic Coast. Destinations throughout the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and in Florida and the Appalachians are major attractions for interregional journeys.

The tourist business is one of the fastest growing businesses in the country, and it is a strong challenger to agriculture as a major money-maker. It would be foolish to assume that recreation development should occur for economic reasons only, but if a community can obtain economic benefits from its recreational opportunities, then the community is indeed lucky.

The best way a community can improve its industrial potential is through the development of a good living environment. The provision of adequate recreational opportunities, schools, and other community facilities is one of the necessary ingredients in creating this environment.

#### Recreation Objectives

Recreation programs and their related facilities have often taken a back seat to supposedly more important considerations in many communities. One popular attitude has often been that recreation development is extremely important, but

we simply cannot get around to providing additional facilities and personnel for the community's program this year. Perhaps still another reason for the lag in providing for recreation needs is the lack of full realization or understanding of the benefits which recreation offers. These benefits can be stated in terms of recreation objectives.

For New Bern, the following recreation objectives fit the community's needs most appropriately; and more specifically, the city's recreation program contributes to the development of:

- 1) Physical health through active physical exercise.
- 2) Good emotional health by fostering a feeling of security.
- 3) Sound social adjustment between individuals, groups, and between individuals and groups.
- 4) Intellectual growth through social interaction.
- 5) A sense of social responsibility and initiative appropriate to a democratic society.
- 6) Economic growth of the community as an indirect result of recreational opportunity.

The six foregoing objectives could well be the objectives of any resident of New Bern or any community. These objectives can be accomplished in New Bern, to some degree, through a truly outstanding recreation program. With this perspective, the development of the city's recreation resources takes on an added meaning.

#### Purpose and Scope of Study

The purpose of this study is to present recommendations which will provide the City of New Bern with the best possible plan for developing its municipal recreation system during the next ten-year period. Due to the purpose of this study, the primary concern is with public recreation resources rather than private

or non-public recreation resources. In order to provide adequate recreation opportunities for the residents of New Bern and its environs, however, the role of private or non-public recreation must be evaluated in order to determine the extent to which the municipal recreation system must be responsible.

In addition to this introduction, the ensuing chapters include the following:

Chapter II enumerates the different types of municipal recreation areas.

The function, size, location, and important features for each type of municipal recreation area are described in terms which are suitable for local needs in New Bern.

Chapter III deals with the minimum land requirements for recreation. The primary aim of this chapter is to establish minimum standards for the amount of land needed to adequately serve the recreation needs of the New Bern urban area during the next ten year period.

Chapter IV inventories and evaluates the recreation resources which New Bern has to offer at present. This inventory and evaluation deals with each public recreation facility in New Bern and its environs within the framework of three main types of recreation service areas-neighborhood, community, and regional. In addition, the recreation programming of the New Bern Recreation Department is evaluated, along with the organizational framework, administration, and personnel employed for public recreation. Non-public and quasi-public recreation resources are also examined and evaluated.

Chapter V presents the planning recommendations or steps necessary to adequately provide recreational opportunities for the residents of New Bern and its environs during the next ten-year period. These recommendations are merged into a master plan for recreational facilities. In addition to actual physical plans, proposals are set out for improving the organizational framework, administration, and personnel situation for the municipal recreation

system. A capital improvements program for orderly development of recreation facilities during the planning period is also presented.

## CHAPTER II

### TYPES OF MUNICIPAL RECREATION AREAS

## TYPES OF MUNICIPAL RECREATION AREAS

The terminology applied to the different types of municipal recreation areas throughout the nation has become rather confusing during recent years. One of the reasons for this confusion is that many recreation functions may be combined on one tract of land. Whatever the reason, hardly a single community uses the same terminology as any other community regarding the types of recreation areas and the recreation standards to be used for each facility. Despite this confusion, there is general agreement on a nation-wide basis as to the basic features necessary in each facility. A description of the various types of municipal recreation areas, their functions, size, location, and important features follows.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK-PLAYGROUND

Neighborhood recreation areas within a community are needed to serve all age groups. Many communities make a definite distinction between the neighborhood park and the neighborhood playground. The purpose of the neighborhood park is to serve as a spot of natural beauty for passive recreation for the whole family. The neighborhood playground, on the other hand, primarily serves to provide active recreational activities for children from five to fifteen years of age.

The trend in the provision of neighborhood recreation areas is toward combining both the park and the playground functions into one site, particularly in older residential areas where space for recreation activities has not been provided in the past. Although the combined neighborhood park-playground should be designed primarily for school-age children, there should also be facilities to serve other age groups. In essence, a recreation area of this type should be able to accommodate and serve the needs of the whole family for limited types of recreation and relaxation.

### Size

The most commonly accepted standard for the site size of a neighborhood recreation area is from 3 to 7 acres, depending on the population to be served. A site size of 5 acres is generally considered a desirable minimum, and an 8-acre site is generally considered a maximum size for practical supervision and organization, although some authorities feel that a neighborhood park-playground site may range up to 15 acres. Any site with less than 3 acres is generally classified as a "mini-park". "Mini-parks" are primarily suited to high density housing complexes, and offer such facilities as a multi-use paved area, fenced-in corner for pre-school children, and an apparatus area.

### Location

Ideally, the location of the neighborhood park-playground will be as close as possible to the center of the neighborhood being served. Because a neighborhood recreation area is used to a great extent by children of elementary school age, a preferred location would adjoin an elementary school or be in the immediate vicinity surrounding the school.

A neighborhood park-playground should definitely be located within a distance of 1/2 mile from every home being served. In high-density residential neighborhoods, the park-playground should be within 1/4 mile of each residence. Normally, the neighborhood recreation area should not be located within non-residential areas or adjacent to railroads, major thoroughfares, or industrial areas.

### Features

The neighborhood park-playground should be carefully planned in order to achieve a minimum of overlapping between the various types of municipal recreation areas. Depending on the site size and the population to be served, the park-playground should contain as many of the following features as possible:

- 1) A fenced-in corner for pre-school children.
- 2) A landscaped park and sitting areas..



- 3) Apparatus area for older children from 5-15 years old.
- 4) Space for the following activities:
  - a) Softball (minimum of 1 field)
  - b) Tennis (minimum of 2 courts)
  - c) Volleyball
  - d) Basketball (concrete multi-use paved area)
  - e) Badminton
  - f) Dancing, etc.
  - g) Skate board riding
- 5) Shelter, toilets, and storage.
- 6) Parking for 20 or more cars.
- 7) Wading pool.
- 8) Water fountains (minimum of 2).
- 9) Handicraft and quiet game area.
- 10) Landscaped buffer strip to protect surrounding neighborhood.
- 11) Night lighting for evening use.

Generally, a community will not be able to provide all of the features listed in each neighborhood park-playground. These features in total, however, would be ideal. Obviously, a minimum-sized neighborhood recreation area could not possibly hold all of the enumerated features. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to obtain sites large enough to provide room for the basic features of the neighborhood park-playground.

#### COMMUNITY PARK-PLAYFIELD

Community park-playfields with highly developed recreation facilities are needed to serve large areas or several neighborhoods within a city. A facility such as this should offer the entire range of recreation features found in the neighborhood park-playground as well as special outdoor facilities, a wide range of indoor facilities, and a limited amount of passive recreation area. The community park-playfield is oriented toward serving the needs of adults and young people over 15 years old, but it should also provide ample playground space for

younger children. In many instances a neighborhood playground is located within a community recreation area of this sort in order to serve the needs of children under 15 in the surrounding neighborhood. Obviously, the community park-playfield is intended to be much larger than the neighborhood park-playground and is to be used for a much wider range of recreational opportunities.

#### Size

Twenty (20) acres is considered a minimum standard for the site size of a community park-playfield, and a site with up to 50 acres is considered as a possible area for the community park-playfield.

#### Location

The community park-playfield can derive many advantages from being located either adjacent to a high school or in the immediate vicinity of a high school because many of the recreational activities provided on park-playfields are used extensively by junior and senior high school students. The high school is a community-wide facility just as the elementary school is a neighborhood facility. Normally, every home being served by a community park-playfield should be within a distance of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles, depending on the surrounding residential density of the community. In addition to the aforementioned locational criteria, there is a definite advantage in locating the park-playfield in an area with good access to public transportation.

#### Features

The features of a community park-playfield should be extensively developed for active recreation purposes since high school students and adults will be the primary users of this particular type of facility. As many of the following features as possible should be included in the park-playfield:

- 1) Sports fields for the following:
  - a) Softball (minimum of 2)
  - b) Baseball (minimum of 1)
  - c) Football (minimum of 1)
  - d) Soccer, etc.
- 2) Courts for the following:
  - a) Tennis (minimum of 6, with 3 or more lighted)
  - b) Horseshoes
  - c) Shuffleboard
  - d) Basketball (concrete multi-use paved area)
- 3) Areas for the following:
  - a) Croquet
  - b) Badminton
  - c) Dancing, etc.
  - d) Skate board riding
- 4) Picnic areas and facilities, including shelter
- 5) Swimming pool
- 6) Recreation building containing the following:
  - a) Gymnasium with spectator seats, showers, lockers, dressing rooms
  - b) Auditorium or assembly hall, may be combined with gymnasium
  - c) Meeting rooms
  - d) Game rooms for activities such as ping pong, billiards, bowling, etc.
  - e) Arts and crafts room
  - f) Reading room, may be part of lounge
  - g) Multi-purpose room
  - h) Photo lab
  - i) Kitchen and snack bar
  - j) Service and storage rooms
  - k) Offices
  - l) Rest rooms
- 7) Play equipment (a wide assortment for all ages)
- 8) Tot lot
- 9) Parking space for 100-200 cars (minimum)
- 10) Night lighting for evening use

The foregoing features for a community park-playfield may need to be adjusted in order to complement the features offered in the surrounding neighborhood park-playgrounds. In addition, the development of these features may be implemented over a period of years according to demand and economic feasibility.

## REGIONAL PARK

The population throughout the nation is rapidly shifting toward urban living. An urban environment consists of high density residential areas, traffic congestion in varying degrees, and a departure from nature. The urban dweller has many reasons for preferring urban life, but he still wants the chance to "get away" and to come in contact with nature. The purpose of the regional park is to provide the urban dweller with such an opportunity.

### Size

A site of 100 acres is generally considered a desirable minimum size for a regional park. Smaller tracts of land that have special scenic interest or beauty may serve the purpose adequately. Normally, sites with over 200-300 acres are not available within an urban area, thus limiting the maximum size of a regional park.

### Location

The location of a regional park within an urban area is usually dictated by the arrangement of other land uses, the availability of vacant land, and the opportunity to take advantage of unusual, natural, or scenic features. The availability of public transportation to the regional park helps to enhance the value of the facility. However, the majority of the users of a recreation facility of this sort will come by automobile.

### Features

Due to the purpose and nature of a regional park, each such facility must be evaluated and developed according to its own merits. The value of a regional park depends primarily on its natural features such as lakes, streams, rivers, ravines, cliffs, hills, views, woodland, open lawns, scenic drives and paths, and other undisturbed natural areas. The activities or features which are most

frequently developed in this type of facility include the following:

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Picnicing                 | 7) Camping                 |
| 2) Boating                   | 8) Zoological Garden       |
| 3) Hiking                    | 9) Botanical Garden        |
| 4) Swimming                  | 10) Nature Museum          |
| 5) Country or Regional Fairs | 11) Comfort Stations       |
| 6) Stadium                   | 12) Refreshment Facilities |

Obviously, many of the foregoing activities or features will require equipment and other items necessitating financial involvement in addition to the expense of maintaining the grounds. Depending on local needs and requirements, a limited number of features from either the community park-playfield or a reservation such as a state park could be incorporated into the design plan of a regional park.

#### SPECIAL RECREATION AREAS

Special recreation areas and facilities may serve a neighborhood, a community, or an entire region, depending on the type of facility. These facilities are termed "special recreation areas" because they do not fit into the most commonly identified types of municipal recreation areas. This category may include zoos, botanical gardens, arboretums, bird sanctuaries, nature centers, nurseries, historical areas, bathing beaches, skating ponds, coasting slides, toboggan slides, camp sites, golf courses, marinas, tennis parks, athletic stadiums, or any number of other recreation areas which are not easily classified.

#### Marina Development

Because of New Bern's location at the conflux of two navigable waterways, the Neuse and Trent Rivers, the possibility of marina development makes this type of special recreation area feasible. The size of area needed for marina purposes varies from a minimum 30-boat harbor to almost 2,000 boats. The location of a marina must be geared to the present and future demand for boating accommodations and to the amount and characteristics of both land and water area

available. An ideal location for a marina would be a partially land-locked cove or lagoon. Other characteristics favorable to marina development include a safe entrance, protected anchorage, channel wide enough to permit maneuvering (100 foot minimum), frontage for slips, dockage and repair facilities, electricity and water, police and fire protection, space for expansion, access roads, parking, etc.

#### SUMMARY

Basically, there are three broad types of recreation areas--neighborhood, community, and regional--which can be defined on a functional basis. Any of these three types of recreation service areas could contain a typical special recreation area. It should be noted that the playlot or "mini-park", a small type of recreation area of less than an acre, is a neighborhood recreation area from a functional standpoint.

Every urban area has some recreation facilities controlled by private interests, particularly golf courses, which help to supplement public recreation areas. Unless existing private recreation facilities account for an unusually large amount of all recreation opportunities within the urban area, the municipal recreation system should assume the full responsibility for providing every citizen with outlets for leisure-time activities. Commercial and private recreation should generally be considered above and beyond the requirements for public municipal recreation resources. It should be noted that this report is primarily concerned with the municipal or other recreation facilities which are available to everyone in the urban area, regardless of race and social or economic status. However, commercial and other private recreation resources will be analyzed and evaluated in terms of the total recreation picture in the New Bern urban area.

### CHAPTER III

#### MINIMUM LAND REQUIREMENTS FOR RECREATION

## MINIMUM LAND REQUIREMENTS FOR RECREATION

A great deal of attention has been focused during recent years on the gap between the actual amount of recreation land in existence and the real demand for recreation space. Almost every community throughout the nation has lagged behind in providing adequate amounts of land for recreation purposes. At the same time, however, it is important to realize that the total acreage of recreation land in a given urban area has little meaning unless the land is usable. A few acres of well-located recreation land is often worth much more than a large amount of land which is inaccessible and unusable.

### OVER-ALL PUBLIC RECREATION LAND REQUIREMENTS

The most commonly accepted minimum standard for public recreational land requirements in an urban area is 1 acre per 100 people or 10 acres per 1,000 people. This minimum standard could apply to the total public recreation acreage within the urban area. It should be pointed out that the allocation of the total amount of recreation land to the various types of municipal recreation service groupings--neighborhood, community, and regional--is subject to a degree of local determination.

### NEIGHBORHOOD RECREATION AREAS

Neighborhood recreation areas include the 1) "mini-park" or playlot, 2) neighborhood park, 3) neighborhood playground, 4) elementary school playground, or any combination of the foregoing facilities. As mentioned earlier in the report, the neighborhood park and the neighborhood playground serve quite well as a combined facility, and it is specifically recommended that the neighborhood playground and neighborhood park be combined whenever possible in the New Bern urban area.

Approximately one-fourth to one-half of the city's total recreation space should normally consist of neighborhood recreation areas. In New Bern's case,



specifically, it is recommended that a minimum of 2½ acres of land be provided per 1,000 residents for neighborhood recreation areas. The way in which this land is divided up for active or passive recreation purposes is subject to a much more detailed examination of each neighborhood's age distribution and family composition. Generally, the use of these areas should be flexible in order to be adaptable to age shifts occurring within a neighborhood over a period of years.

#### COMMUNITY RECREATION AREAS

Community recreation areas include the 1) community playfield, 2) community park, 3) community recreation center, and 4) high school play areas. As in the neighborhood park-playground, the community park and the community playfield may be combined into one site, including a community center or recreation building. This latter alternative is specifically recommended for New Bern.

Within the New Bern urban area, a minimum standard of 2½ acres of land per 1,000 people is recommended for community recreation areas. Generally, the aggregate total of community recreation space will be almost the same as the contrasting total for neighborhood recreation space. In computing the acreage totals for community recreation purposes, special recreation areas or facilities serving most of the community but not of regional importance should be included. For example, a large "tennis park" might serve the entire community but not be of any regional importance; and although a facility of this type would be a special recreation area, it would be included in the acreage computation for community recreation areas.

#### REGIONAL RECREATION AREAS

Regional recreation areas are composed primarily of 1) regional parks, and 2) other special recreation areas such as golf courses, large stadiums, marinas,

etc., which serve not only the urban area population of the community but a much larger regional area as well. Actually, the regional park may contain several activities normally considered as a special recreation area. For example, a marina or golf course could be a portion of a regional park.

It is specifically recommended that New Bern provide at least 5 acres of land for regional recreation purposes for each 1,000 people in the urban area. Although the minimum land standard above is not based on a regional population, it should be recognized that the residents of New Bern and its immediate environs will reap a major portion of the benefit derived from regional recreation areas located in the local area.

#### SPECIAL RECREATION AREAS

As indicated earlier, special recreation areas do not fit into the most commonly identified types of municipal recreation areas. In many instances, these facilities obviously and clearly serve one of the three types of recreation service areas--neighborhood, community, or regional. In computing land acreage totals for recreation purposes, special recreation areas should be classified with one of these three types of recreation service areas whenever possible. If a particular recreation area or facility is not so easily classified, then the recreation acreage will need to be computed separately.

Because special recreation areas are obviously a portion of the total over-all recreation land in the urban area, these areas should be included in evaluating whether the urban area's total recreation acreage meets the minimum standard of having 1 acre per 100 people or 10 acres per 1,000 people. However, no minimum standard is needed to govern or guide the amount of recreation land devoted to special recreation areas in New Bern and its surrounding environs. One reason for this is that the specialized recreation needs of the people can be provided within the common types of neighborhood, community, and regional recreation areas.

## SUMMARY OF RECREATION LAND REQUIREMENTS

The minimum recreation land requirements for the three types of service areas--neighborhood, community, and regional--have been set forth. The status of special recreation areas has been clarified within the framework of the total amount of recreation land. If the standards indicated above are followed, approximately 25 per cent of the total amount of recreation land will be used for neighborhood purposes, 25 per cent for community purposes, and 50 per cent for regional purposes. In addition, the commonly accepted minimum recreation land requirement of 10 acres of land per 1,000 people will be followed. It should be noted that some authorities feel the foregoing standard should be increased to as much as 15 acres or more per 1,000 people. Certainly, the preservation of natural topographic features such as waterfronts, rugged terrain, and stream valleys should be done on a generous scale, even when such preservation means exceeding the basic standard.

## CHAPTER IV

### INVENTORY AND EVALUATION OF EXISTING RECREATION RESOURCES

## INVENTORY AND EVALUATION OF EXISTING RECREATION RESOURCES

In order to do the best job of planning for future recreation facilities, a good inventory and evaluation of existing recreation resources must be made. This examination should provide insight into both the ways of improving existing recreation facilities and into the future needs for adding recreation areas and facilities. In addition to planning for physical facilities, this inventory and evaluation will cover certain aspects of the city's present recreation program, its organization, and administration.

### NEIGHBORHOOD RECREATION AREAS

An examination of New Bern's recreation resources discloses the fact that it is extremely difficult to determine neighborhood recreation areas from community recreation areas in certain instances. Indeed, such a determination is not clear cut according to nation-wide standards. It should be noted that the neighborhood playground areas accompanying elementary schools will be examined as a separate unit in this chapter. The following recreation areas should serve primarily neighborhood recreation purposes in New Bern.

- 1) Trent Court is a 2-acre recreation facility located with the Trent Court Public Housing Project next to the Trent River. This facility has a baseball field and play apparatus, serving both as a playlot and as a neighborhood playground. Because of its limited size and purpose, Trent Court is limited primarily to serving as a backyard for public housing residents. The city's recreation department has organized summer activities at this site because it is designated for public housing residents.
- 2) Craven Terrace is a 1.5-acre recreation facility located with the Craven Terrace Housing Project. The features of this area include

space for softball and football games in addition to play apparatus and a basketball court. It also has a fenced totlot with a playhouse. Craven Terrace is limited to serving as backyard space for public housing residents, and it is more suitable for playlot rather than playground purposes because of its size. As in the Trent Court recreation area, Craven Terrace has organized summer activities carried out under the auspices of the recreation department because it is designated for public housing residents. The Neighborhood Youth Corps assists the recreation department here because of the high usage this facility receives from the neighborhood.

- 3) Tryon Village (Meadows Street) is a 1-acre recreation area in a residential area. This facility contains some play apparatus; and due to its limited site size and topographic features, it should continue to serve primarily as a playlot for the surrounding residents. Tryon Village can be reached only by crossing residential streets, but this does not appear to adversely affect its use. The recreation department also has a one week summer fun mobile program here in which the Neighborhood Youth Corps assists.
- 4) Pierce Park is a .5-acre playlot area adjoining the Pierce Field playground on Neuse Avenue. This facility has play apparatus and a picnicking area. Pierce Park should serve the passive recreation needs of the surrounding neighborhood in the future, and it should be considered as a portion of the Pierce Field Recreation area. The recreation department has its Summer Fun Mobile here for 1 week.
- 5) Pierce Field (Neuse Avenue) is a 3.2-acre recreation area which adjoins the aforementioned Pierce Park facility. This site contains two lighted softball fields and space for football play, with bleachers on

one side. This facility also has rest rooms, a utility room in a concrete block structure, and a small prefab concession stand. If Pierce Field and Pierce Park are considered together, they contain the essential characteristics necessary for a neighborhood park-playground. Some of the scheduled uses include Midget football and Women's and Sunday School Softball leagues. There is a possibility that the area beside Jack Smith Creek across Neuse Avenue from Pierce Field could be purchased and utilized for passive or adult recreation in the future.

- 6) George Street Recreation Center is a 2-acre recreation area which contains the newly renovated recreation center building for the elderly. This area contains space for softball, football, basketball, and three lighted tennis courts, in addition to the recreation center building. The recreation department will continue to bring the Summer Fun Mobile here for one week. The recreation center building contains a combination gymnasium and auditorium, game room, club room, and space for arts and crafts. The George Street Recreation Center building serves as a community rather than a neighborhood facility because it was renovated mainly for the elderly. The city will allow the Craven County Council on Aging to use the facility for their functions, but in the evenings, when there is not much elderly use, the city plans to have other adult activities in the building.
- 7) Fort Totten Park is a 5.4-acre neighborhood recreation area located between Neuse Boulevard and Trent Boulevard. At the present, features of this facility include a lighted baseball field, play apparatus, space for football play, with rest rooms and utility room in a concrete block structure. Fort Totten Park, because of its central location, is probably the most intensively used recreation facility for organized sports in New Bern. It exemplifies the concept of the neighborhood

park-playground better than any other facility in the City. The recreation department maintains the facility and also conducts Midget football, men and boy's flag football, and industrial softball programs at Fort Totten Park.

- 8) Cedar Street Recreation Center is a combination gymnasium and auditorium located on a .6- acre site. It also contains a game room, a club room, and space for arts and crafts. Outside there is one basketball goal and some play apparatus. There is very little parking space, very little area for outside play, no room for expansion, and the nearby D. E. Henderson Recreation Center has virtually taken the place of the Cedar Street Recreation Center.
- 9) Lincoln Street Playground is a privately owned 0.5-acre recreation facility which contains playground apparatus and a basketball goal. It is located in a densely populated area of the city and is intensively used. The recreation department supervises an eight week summer program here each year.  
Swan Playground is privately owned and presently serves only as a practice field for Midget football. The recreation department mows this area only during the football season; otherwise, the lot is not used.

The nine neighborhood recreation areas described above have a total of 16.7 acres of space. This does not include the playground areas which accompany elementary schools within the urban area.

#### COMMUNITY RECREATION AREAS

The following newly-completed facilities, which replace the George Street and cedar Street Recreation Centers, should develop into excellent community park playgrounds.

- 1) West New Bern Recreation Area is a 25-acre site situated in a subdivision west of Trent Park Elementary School. The site is well located, with good topographic features, and should be extensively developed as per the requirements set forth for this community park playfield. At present,



the West New Bern Recreation Center is complete and one Babe Ruth League baseball field with press box, rest rooms, concessions and bleachers is complete. All adjoining roads should be paved because of the volume of recreation traffic. The recreation department has an extensive program for this facility. It covers free play periods, arts and crafts, basketball leagues, Community College basketball practice and games, community meetings and other related programs. The Recreation Director's office is also located here.

- 2) D. E. Henderson Recreation Area is a 22-acre site located near the center of New Bern. Extensive earth moving by the City has filled some drainage ditches which had cut off access to parts of the site. This area should be developed into a full scale community park-playfield, in accordance with the recommendations contained herein, to serve the high density neighborhoods nearby. At present the Stanley White Recreation Center is complete and one baseball field, two paved tennis courts, an open play area, and comfort station are complete. The Recreation Center building is identical to the West New Bern Recreation building. The recreation department has basically the same organized program here also. Each Recreation Center has 1 athletic supervisor, and 1 custodian full-time, plus 4 part-time assistants for each Center as needed.

The two community park-playfields described above contain a total of 47 acres of community recreation space. The full development of these facilities should adequately serve the community recreation needs of the New Bern urban area throughout the planning period. Special recreation areas and play-fields accompanying high schools were not included in the foregoing evaluation, but these will be examined later in the report.

#### REGIONAL RECREATION AREAS

At present, New Bern has developed one of two regional recreation resources. This development effort has resulted, in part, from the promotion of tourism

and the development of tourist oriented recreation facilities. The following areas have been set aside for regional park development since 1962.

- 1) Glenburnie Park is a 51-acre regional park located on the Neuse River north of the city. Although this park is not completely developed, it has considerable recreation value in its natural features--the Neuse River, cliffs, hills, ravines, and woodlands. Undoubtedly, Glenburnie Park is the most scenic site for a regional park in the New Bern area. The present development includes: a winding loop road, a public boat ramp with paved parking and a small pier, five shelters with parking nearby, comfort stations, and a children's play area.
- 2) Lawson Creek Park is a 140-acre undeveloped regional park site located just west of Tryon Palace on the Trent River. A new highway has recently been completed that divides the property. However, the city does have access under the highway bridge. This will serve as a connection for the 2 parcels of Lawson Creek Park. This site has been used as the city's landfill site, and a large percentage of it is marshy. Landfill operations will be terminated in the near future. It is possible that this park site could be developed in sections as landfill operations are cleaned up. Because of the topographic features at Lawson Creek Park, boating and water recreation can be extensively developed, but a majority of the land should be left in a natural state. In any case, the development of this facility will be a long-range proposition.

The two regional parks contain a total of 191 acres of potential recreation land. Glenburnie Park is getting a high volume of users now, and "crowd control" and vehicular control are badly needed. These will be discussed later in the report.

## SPECIAL RECREATION AREAS

Special recreation areas for the general public are rather limited in New Bern. Eventually, many of the recreational opportunities offered in facilities of this type will be developed primarily in the two community park-playfields and the two regional parks. However, New Bern has the following three recreation facilities classified in the special recreation area category.

- 1) Union Point is a very scenic 3.5-acre recreation site located at the point of the conflux of the Neuse and Trent Rivers. A recreation center building is located on this site and contains a kitchen area and a large activity and game room with a fireplace at each end. Union Point is an old landfill site and the recreation building, over the years, has settled and developed some cracks in the walls and floors. But the building is still intensively used for private parties, flea markets, karate lessons, square dances, and classes in flower arranging, net mending, etc. It is generally felt by the city that the renovation and expansion of this structure would be too costly, due to structural problems. Other facilities on this site include a picnic area, rest rooms, and intensively used boat slip and docks. By virtue of these facilities, this park serves not only a community recreation need but serves also as a regional facility. Union Point's location next to the U.S. 70 bridge over the Trent River places it at a very prominent point for attracting tourists. The proximity of this site to the Central Business District rules out the possibility of ever using Union Point for neighborhood recreation purposes.
- 2) Kafer Park is a 2,300-seat athletic stadium located on a 3.2-acre site, and it serves for both baseball and football activities. This facility actually serves a community-type recreation purpose, but it is relegated to a special recreation area status due to its specialized purpose. The Kafer Park site, which is on George Street, does not have proper

off-street parking facilities, its location is very poor, and it is in very poor condition. The City has recently acquired the old North Carolina National Guard Armory, which is located adjacent to Kafer Park on the corner of George and Queen Streets. This structure is presently being used by the New Bern Civic Theatre for rehearsals and storage, through an agreement with the City. The structure is in very poor condition, and there are very limited parking facilities. The building has basketball goals, and the City is considering using the facility for league basketball practice.

- 3) Bicentennial Park is a 2.5-acre scenic site located near downtown on the Trent River. Topographically the site is flat. It is bordered on three sides by undeveloped city-owned property, and on the fourth side by the Trent River. The Redevelopment Commission of the City of New Bern has approved adjacent land for commercial development. A thirty foot right-of-way lies between the property and the Trent River. Within this right-of-way are a bulkhead, and tree and streetlamp lined six foot concrete walk . A small paved area with flagpole and benches lies within the site. The Park should be developed as per the requirements set forth for this site under Chapter V.

Jaycee Park was a private recreation area along the Trent River leased by the New Bern Jaycees. The city conducted swimming programs here. This facility is no longer available, and the city, therefore, has no swimming facilities for the general public.

The three foregoing recreation areas contain a total of 9.2 acres. Of these three special recreation areas, the Union Point and the Bicentennial Park facilities could conceivably be considered as definite long-range recreation resources for New Bern residents. The functions served by Kafer Park are offered

in the two existing community park-playfields. The swimming facilities at one time available in the Jaycee Park will eventually also be available in these two recreation areas.

#### SCHOOL PLAYGROUNDS AND PLAYFIELDS

School playground facilities with elementary schools and playfield facilities with high schools must be counted as a part of the total public recreation space in New Bern and its environs. At the same time, however, the exact amount of each school site which should be designated as playground or playfield space for recreation purposes is questionable. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of Advance Planning, has recommended that a minimum site size for an elementary school be at least ten (10) acres. Other authorities who are concerned with site size standards on a nation-wide basis have urged that a minimum elementary school site be at least five (5) acres. Regardless of the elementary school site size, leaders in school design have urged that at least one-half of each school site be devoted to playground or playfield purposes. For New Bern's schools, it has been assumed that one-half of every school site, regardless of site size, is being used for recreation purposes of either a neighborhood or community nature.

In order to calculate the estimated amount of school land devoted to recreational activities, one-half of each school site indicated in Table 1 is shown as school land for recreation purposes.

Table 1. SCHOOL LAND USED FOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

| <u>Name of School</u>        | <u>Total Site Size</u> | <u>Estimated Land for Recreation</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Albert H. Bangert Elementary | 13.0                   | 6.5                                  |
| Oaks Road Elementary         | 15.0                   | 7.5                                  |
| J. T. Barber Junior High     | 12.0                   | 6.0                                  |
| H. J. McDonald Junior High   | 50.0                   | 25.0                                 |
| New Bern Senior High         | 26.0                   | 13.0                                 |
| Eleanor Marshall Elementary  | 1.8                    | 0.9                                  |
| Trent Park Elementary        | 13.0                   | 6.5                                  |
| F. R. Danyus Elementary      | <u>3.5</u>             | <u>1.7</u>                           |
| TOTAL IN ACRES               | 134.3                  | 67.1                                 |

Table 1 on the previous page indicates that there is an estimated 67.1 acres of school land being used for recreation purposes. Assuming that only Barber and McDonald Junior High Schools and New Bern High School serve community-wide functions, approximately 44 acres of land are used for community recreation purposes. Likewise, the elementary schools serving neighborhood functions have the remaining 23.1 acres of land devoted to neighborhood recreation uses. Obviously, the basic assumption that one-half of each school site is being used for recreation purposes is subject to error, but the assumption as applied to the entire city school system should be reasonably accurate for the purpose of determining the adequacy of existing recreation space and future recreation space needs within the New Bern urban area.

#### EVALUATION OF EXISTING PUBLICLY CONTROLLED RECREATION SPACE

The foregoing description and inventory of neighborhood recreation areas, community recreation areas, regional recreation areas, special recreation areas, and school playgrounds and playfields provide the basis for evaluating the publicly controlled recreation space in New Bern and its environs. One of the concerns of this study is to compare the total amount of public recreation space in New Bern and its environs with nation-wide standards for recreation space needed in an urban area.

New Bern's urban area contains a total 331-acres of publicly controlled recreation space. However, it should be noted that approximately 217.5 acres or 66 per cent of all existing publicly controlled recreation space is still undeveloped. Furthermore, most of this undeveloped recreation acreage had been either acquired or allocated for recreational purposes since the time of the original study in 1963. The undeveloped 140 -acre Lawson Creek Park, in particular, may not be developed for many years to come. In fact, this park may never have all 140 acres fully developed due to topographic conditions, such as marshy land.

Earlier, a minimum land standard for recreation space of 1 acre per 100 persons, or 10 acres per 1,000 persons was set forth. The 1976 Land Development Plan for New Bern indicated that the present urban area population is approximately 23,000 (includes Trent Woods and Township 8). This urban area population figure would indicate a need for a minimum of 230 acres of recreation acreage if the minimum land standard for recreation space was followed literally. Since the New Bern urban area has a total of 331 acres of recreation land, there is no existing problem with respect to the amount of recreation land available. If the 217.5 acres of undeveloped recreation land is subtracted from the 331 acre total of all existing recreation space, one can see that only 113.5 acres of developed recreation space is available in the urban area at present. Of this 113.5 acres, school playgrounds and playfields account for 37.1 acres, while other public recreation areas account for 76.4 acres. In any case, the existing amount of developed recreation land in New Bern and its environs falls below the minimum land standard for recreation space needed. However, the city can easily come up to the proper standards by presently developing land which has been set aside by the city for recreation purposes.

#### PUBLIC RECREATION PROGRAMS

The New Bern Recreation Department has a large variety of organized recreation programs in progress throughout the entire year. These activities are divided into two groupings: (1) Fall and winter programs, and (2) spring and summer programs. At the present, there are 44 active fall and winter programs, including 16 athletic programs and 28 social programs. The spring and summer programs include 13 athletic programs and 6 social programs for a total of 19 programs. In all there are 63 different recreation programs being sponsored by the city's recreation department during the course of a whole year, and this count does not include the activities accompanying playgrounds during the summer months.



The fact that New Bern residents have a large number of public recreation programs available is rather amazing, in view of the limited amount of existing developed recreation facilities and the limited number of recreation personnel. The city's recreation department has gone as far as it can go from a programming standpoint with these limitations on both facilities and personnel. The mere number of recreation programs being sponsored by the recreation department indicates a dire need for additional personnel. In summary, new public recreation programs cannot be offered to New Bern's residents until additional personnel and some new or renovated facilities are made available, and many of the existing programs being offered are subjected to severe limitations. The city is fortunate to have such a large number of volunteers to help in programs such as football, softball, baseball, and basketball, which would be limited otherwise.

#### ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION, AND PERSONNEL FOR PUBLIC RECREATION

A community which has a tremendous amount of recreation land and facilities does not necessarily have a good over-all recreation program. The organizational framework, administrative operation, and quantity and quality of recreation personnel are just as important as the actual physical facilities available for recreation purposes.

##### Organization and Administration

The Recreation Enabling Law of North Carolina allows a community three alternatives for the organizational arrangement of its recreation department. These three alternatives are as follows: 1) recreation department under the city manager just as any other department of city government, 2) recreation department with an advisory recreation commission subject to the general control and supervision of the city manager, and 3) recreation department under the supervision and direction of a separate recreation commission.

The trend in the organizational arrangement of recreation departments in North Carolina communities is toward that of having an advisory recreation group to the recreation department which would still be subject to the general control and supervision of the city manager. Most recreation authorities definitely feel that there should be a group of lay citizens to assist the public recreation department. New Bern, at present, has this particular organizational setup, and in general it appears successful and compatible.

Obviously, the organizational arrangement and administration of a public recreation program cannot be separated. The actual administration of the public recreation program is predetermined, to a large degree, by the organizational arrangement. The organizational chart on the following page indicates the existing organizational arrangement of the public recreation program in New Bern.

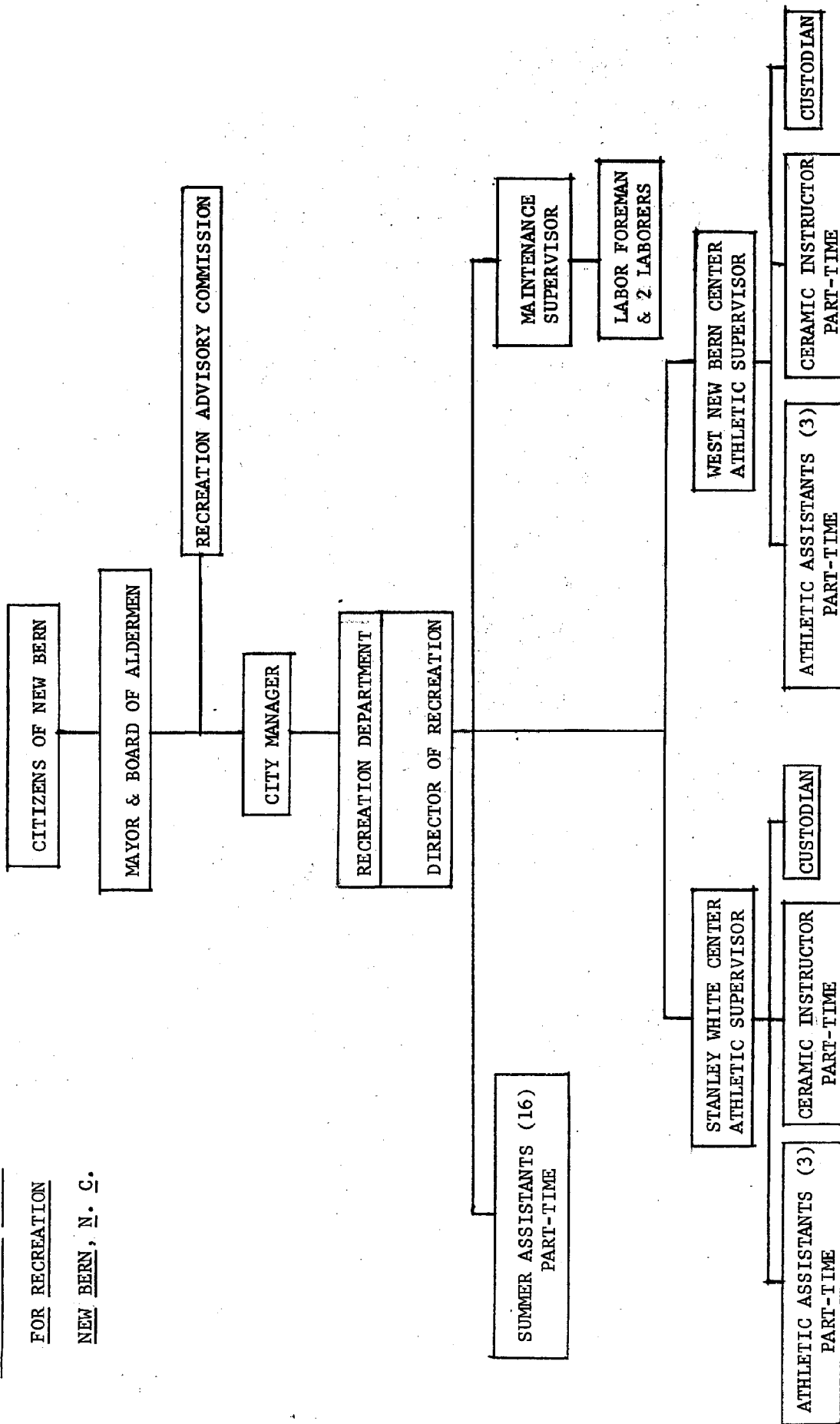
As the organizational chart indicates, a majority of the city's recreation personnel is directly responsible to one person--the city recreation director. One result of this type of organizational arrangement is that the city recreation director must spend a disproportionate amount of time with specific recreational activities. One reason for this situation is the lack of an adequate number of personnel to supervise the various recreational activities. In any case, the city recreation director needs to be able to devote the majority of her time to administrative tasks rather than actually supervising the recreation activities sponsored by the city recreation department.

EXISTING

ORGANIZATION CHART

FOR RECREATION

NEW BERN, N. C.



## Personnel

The city recreation department has ten full-time employees and twenty-four or twenty-five part-time employees provided for in the budget. The positions of the recreation personnel are as follows:

| <u>Full-Time</u>  | <u>Part-Time and Summer</u>   |
|---|---|
| City Recreation Director                                |   |
| Stanley White Center Supervisor<br>Custodian (1)        | Athletic Assistants (3)<br>Ceramic Instructor (1)                                 |
| West New Bern Center Supervisor<br>Custodian (1)        | Athletic Assistants (3)<br>Ceramic Instructor (1)                                 |
| Park Attendant  | Tennis Instructors (3)<br>Playground Directors (5)<br>Mobile Unit Instructors (2) |
| Maintenance Supervisor<br>Labor Foreman<br>Laborers (2) | Water Front Director (1)<br>Swimming Instructors (4)<br><br>Custodial Helper (1)  |

With the relatively large number of programs now being sponsored by the city recreation department, the number of employees is very inadequate. The existing inadequacies, however, will be magnified when the two community park-playfields and the two regional parks become fully developed. Likewise, the new regional parks, although primarily intended to be left in a natural state for passive recreation, will require a great deal of maintenance, which increases the demand for personnel. In summary, the city recreation department is going to have an increasing need for additional personnel as new recreation facilities are completed and new programs are initiated.

### NON-PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC RECREATION RESOURCES

There are several recreation facilities available to residents in New Bern and its environs which are not publicly controlled. These facilities are classified under commercial, industrial, church, and quasi-public categories.

Obviously, the recreational opportunities offered in non-public facilities should be analyzed carefully in order to evaluate the extent to which the non-public or quasi-public recreation resources help to supplement municipal or publicly controlled recreation resources. Existing non-public or quasi-public recreation resources in New Bern and the immediate vicinity are described below.

- 1) Commercial and Quasi-Public Recreation is relatively limited in New Bern, although the potential for future development is very good. New Bern has two theaters, a pool room, a golf driving range, a roller skating rink, and a bowling center with 16 alleys. Local private clubs offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities, including 5 golf courses within a 35 mile radius, with complete clubhouse facilities, tennis and swimming; but these opportunities are obviously not available as commercial recreation for the general public. There are no golf courses open to the public in the New Bern urban area. The Eastern Carolina Yacht Club is still another example of a private club offering recreational opportunities for a limited group, although there are private marinas open to the public. Several of these private clubs are located on the Trent River outside of the New Bern urban area, as defined. Tryon Palace, a restoration of the last Colonial Capitol and First State Capitol of North Carolina, is primarily a commercial tourist attraction rather than a recreation facility for residents of the urban area; and it must be considered as a commercial or quasi-public recreation resource.

Future commercial recreation and quasi-public recreation development in New Bern and its surrounding environs will depend primarily on the city's further growth as a tourist center and on the tremendous potential for water recreation. Because of the increasing popularity of bowling throughout the nation, it would seem logical that this activity

would expand during future years. The Atlantic Ocean and its accompanying bathing beaches and recreational activities located only 35 miles southeast of New Bern must be considered as a regional recreation resource for the city's residents. At the same time, however, the beach resources available to the city's residents tend to compete with commercial recreation activities in New Bern. The demand for commercial recreation can be rather limited, and proposed future development should be analyzed in view of its potential drawing market area.

- 2) Industrial Recreation in New Bern is not a vital aspect of the city's total recreation resources. New Bern is not an industrial city, and the industries located in the urban area are not large as contrasted to industrial plants in other communities, both in North Carolina and throughout the nation. In fact, New Bern has less than half of the State's average employment in industry. Another important factor is that a majority of the industrial labor force does not live in New Bern. Since industrial recreation is primarily a nighttime activity, a large majority of the industrial labor force would have to drive a considerable distance in order to participate in an industrial recreation program; and, therefore, most all the industrial recreation is organized by the Craven County Recreation Department.

The future prospects for developing industrial recreation must be weighed carefully in view of past experience. None of the existing industries in the urban area have any of their own physical facilities for recreation purposes, and they are not likely to develop their own facilities until some of the individual industrial establishments have substantial increases in number of employees. Also, industrial recreation can get help in promoting a program of this sort from the Craven County Recreation Department and may get some industry to commit

itself to the development of its own physical facilities. It may take a number of years of industrial expansion before the industrial labor force living in the New Bern urban area will be large enough to actively support an industrial recreation program. Past experience indicates that industrial recreation activities must be highly programmed in order to survive. Until an industrial recreation program is established on a permanent basis, a framework should be set forth for the City of New Bern to periodically evaluate the feasibility of promoting industrial recreation.

- 3) Church Recreation helps to supplement the regular public recreation activities in New Bern by sponsoring little league teams, men's volleyball, basketball and softball teams, as well as limited recreation programs within individual churches. Most all the churches in the area have some type of paved play space or some play apparatus. The objectives of public recreation and church recreation should continue to be promoted by the city recreation department. Overall, New Bern's present church recreation is on a solid and sound basis.

CHAPTER V  
RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The first four chapters of this report have paved the way for presenting the specific recommendations for recreation in New Bern. Chapter Four which inventoried and evaluated the existing recreation resources in New Bern and its environs was pointed specifically at the problem of discerning the improvements needed. Since the very essence of any recreation program must begin with recreation land and facilities, the following discussion is an appropriate point of departure.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS AND FACILITIES

Recommendations for the physical development of public recreation areas and facilities must be directed toward each individual recreation area or facility. However, it should be noted that these individual areas or facilities can be categorized into four broad groups: 1) existing recreation areas or facilities which will be maintained primarily on a status quo basis with gradual improvement over the years, 2) existing recreation areas and facilities which can and should be improved through some major additions during the planning period, 3) recreation areas and facilities which are either being proposed for the first time, or which are existing areas on which little physical development has occurred, and 4) those existing recreation areas which should be disposed of.

The following recreation areas and facilities should be maintained primarily on a status quo basis with gradual improvements during the planning period:

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) Union Point                     | 6) Pierce Park                |
| 2) George Street Recreation Center | 7) Tryon Village              |
| 3) Fort Totten Park                | 8) Craven Terrace             |
| 4) Trent Park-Playground           | 9) Trent Court                |
| 5) Pierce Field                    | 10) Lincoln Street Playground |

It should be noted that the function and importance of some of the foregoing recreation areas and facilities will not be as great in the future. For example,

the full development of D. E. Henderson and West New Bern Recreation Areas will relieve the heavily used facilities in some of the above parks.

The following existing recreation areas and facilities can and should be improved through some major additions during the planning period:

- 1) West New Bern Recreation Area - This area of 25 acres is heavily wooded and well drained. The site is adjacent to areas of residential development and it is near city schools.

The existing recreation center building contains approximately 14,000 sq. ft. with a gym, showers and lockers, game rooms, kitchen, meeting rooms, art and ceramic rooms, storage, offices, and rest rooms.

A swimming pool containing approximately 5,400 sq. ft. should be included in the development of this area, with an area for swimmers and a separate area for divers. Contiguous to the recreation building, in addition to the swimming pool, there should be a wading pool, spectator's lounge area, snack bar, playground apparatus area for small children, shuffleboard and horseshoe courts, and a multiple use paved area for volleyball, badminton, basketball, dancing, and skating. Six tennis courts are recommended and these should be lighted for use at night.

One full-size baseball field and one softball field, are recommended in addition to the existing Babe Ruth league baseball field. Also, there should be two standard size football fields. It is proposed that all these facilities be lighted for night play. Space should be provided for bleachers on each of these fields, and it is recommended that concession stands, storage space, and press boxes be provided in conjunction with the bleachers for the regulation baseball field similar to the facilities provided at Babe Ruth league field. Rest rooms should also be provided in a location removed from but convenient to the bleachers for the regulation ballfield. Other rest rooms will be needed as other facilities are developed. Drinking fountains should

be provided at convenient points where there is the greatest concentration of spectators or participants.

A group and family picnic area should be developed including a picnic shelter. It is recommended that several cast iron or steel pedestal-type charcoal outdoor cooking units be provided along with picnic table and bench combinations throughout the picnic area. Toilet facilities should be provided in a separate building, preferably at one end of the picnic area. A drinking fountain should be installed in the picnic area, specifically in the vicinity of the picnic shelter. Ample water supply connections should be provided for each of the outdoor recreation areas.

Other portions of this recreation area might be used for informal play, game tables, crafts, nature study, day camp groups, and other activities. Parking space is recommended for approximately 218 cars.

Extreme care should be taken to preserve as many of the existing trees on this site as possible during the course of development of the recreation facilities. To supplement the existing trees and other desirable vegetation to be preserved, native trees, shrubs, and perhaps some herbaceous material should be planted in the picnic area and elsewhere in accordance with a carefully conceived landscape planting plan.

- 2) D. E. Henderson Recreation Area - This area of 22 acres is contiguous to high density residential areas and is near city schools. A portion of the site has an extensive covering of trees and undergrowth and is, for the most part, low and wet. One large drainage canal crosses the property from Chapman Street on the east, flowing westerly, and then north to the boundary line of the tract. A smaller drainage canal flows along the southwest boundary line of the tract, and another canal is piped from the southeast corner of the property to the southwest

corner. A proposed thoroughfare will pass through the tract as an extension of "K" Street, curving southward through the area and extending to connect with First Street at Neuse Boulevard. It is recommended that the large canal be piped from Chapman Street to the west edge of the proposed "K" Street thoroughfare. It is further recommended that a pedestrian overpass be constructed over the proposed thoroughfare at the location shown on the plan.

It is proposed to clear all existing trees and undergrowth from areas where wet conditions prevail and raise the grade of these areas sufficiently to facilitate surface drainage into the canals while rendering the land usable for recreation facilities.

The existing Stanley White recreation building contains a gym, showers and lockers, game rooms, kitchen, meeting rooms, art and ceramic rooms, storage, offices, and rest rooms.

A swimming pool is recommended contiguous to the recreation building. It should contain approximately 5,000 sq. ft. with an area for swimmers and a separate area for divers. Adjacent to the swimming pool will be a wading pool, area for spectators, and a snack bar.

Proposed facilities include a multiple use paved area for dancing, skating, volleyball and basketball, a playground apparatus area, two additional tennis courts (for a total of four). Tennis and handball practice courts and a skateboard arena with a skateboard shop. The skateboard arena and shop could be leased to private business with City controls.

A field suitable for either softball or Babe Ruth league baseball, together with a regulation football field, are proposed in addition to the existing regulation baseball field. Space should be provided for either permanent or portable bleachers. Concession stands, press boxes and storage space should be included at each of the baseball fields.

Rest rooms should also be provided in locations removed from but convenient to the bleachers. A drinking fountain should be installed at each of the ball fields, as well as adequate water supply connections. All outdoor recreation areas should be lighted for night use.

It is recommended that the area adjacent to the tennis courts be developed for picnicking, day camping, nature study, arts and crafts, and similar activities. A picnic shelter is recommended for this area, as well as picnic table and bench combinations, pedestal-type charcoal outdoor cooking units, winding paths, and footbridges over the canal. A separate building has been provided for rest rooms. Lighting of the picnic areas will be essential for safety and maximum use.

The existing large canal in this recreation area should be cleaned out, dredged deeper, widened and the banks on each side sloped back. The earth obtained from this excavation can be used as land fill on the adjacent areas.

Parking space should be provided at strategic locations throughout the recreation area for approximately 235 cars.

Existing trees which are desirable species and in good condition should be preserved wherever possible. New plantings should be made in accordance with a carefully prepared planting plan, using native trees, shrubs and perhaps some herbaceous material.

- 3) Glenburnie Recreation Area - This area of 51 acres located on the Neuse River is situated less than three miles from the center of New Bern. It lies on relatively high ground overlooking the Neuse River, and it is immediately northwest of the sewage disposal plant. The property is well drained, northeast to the Neuse River, and southwest to a drainage canal situated along the boundary line of the property. Many large and

beautiful pines are growing on the site. The trees, the elevation, and the water make this a very choice site for development as a recreation area.

A recreation building should be constructed to serve as the center of activity and administration. The best location for this building is on a promontory adjacent to the boating area. This structure should provide office space, kitchen, snack bar, social and club room, deck for dancing and games, and toilets.

Picnicking facilities should be located along the waterfront at suitable sites. The existing marina could be expanded to supply basic boating needs such as refueling and servicing. Piers and boat slips could be added to accommodate power craft for those boat owners who might like to spend a day or more relaxing at Glenburnie.

One of the possible features of Glenburnie could be a trailer park in the area along the southwestern boundary of the site. Space for ten or more trailers should be provided here for travelers passing through New Bern who would welcome a location where they could park their trailers and at the same time avail themselves of the recreation opportunities at Glenburnie. It is recommended the trailer park area be planned so that the presence of the trailers will not detract from the natural beauty of the site.

The area in the western corner of the property should be reserved for such activities as general open play, softball and archery. This area is recommended because of its flatness, its location away from the recommended passive recreation areas, and because the removal of trees from this area to accommodate open play activities would least disrupt the natural beauty of the site.

The area immediately to the northeast of the proposed active play area is recommended as a camping site with tents, Adirondack shelters,

or cabins. Immediately northeast of the recommended camping area, a children's day camp center, with a shelter, canteen, toilets, open play area and picnicking facilities could be developed.

Another possible feature of Glenburnie would be a walk along the bluff overlooking the Neuse River. Such a walk or trail could terminate with a fishing pier projecting out over the river near the northeast corner of the site.

The center of the Glenburnie area might possibly be reserved primarily for family and group picnicking, with shelters, council rings, picnic table and bench combinations, pedestal-type charcoal cooking units, canteen and toilets. Playground apparatus could be placed to one side of this central location for passive activities. Any additional playground apparatus should be of the rustic type, constructed from logs, rocks, and other native material whenever possible.

The existing dirt roads encourage vehicles to leave the road, and this has resulted in rutting and erosion problems, as well as a general abuse of the park. Some measures which could be utilized to help control traffic are:

- 1) Pave the road system and add concrete curb and gutter throughout, including in the parking areas, or
- 2) Place bollards or large posts just off the edge of the road and parking areas on both sides, spaced close enough to prohibit cars from going between them. Or bollards might be spaced approximately 10 feet apart with a heavy chain or rope from bollard to bollard, or
- 3) Construct an entrance gate and gatehouse manned by a park attendant who would let only city/county residents, or other designated visitors, into the park, who have properly registered with the Recreation Department, and who have agreed to abide by certain rules and regulations.

Of the above control measures, the third alternative is preferred, since it could provide positive control with the least disturbance to the natural beauty of the site and at the least cost. The plan shows the location for the gate house, pedestrian and vehicular traffic control gates and fence. The fence should be of the chain link type, at least six feet high.

It will be noted that access to the boat launching ramp is left open, with no controlling gates or fencing.

It will be necessary to man the gate house during the summer season only. The park gates should be closed at dusk each day year round.

For the first season or two, an extra attendant may be needed to enforce the park rules and regulations. This attendant could police the area and write tickets for violators, who might subsequently be banned from the park after a second or third offense.

An additional advantage in employing this method of traffic control is that go-carts, motorcycles, and four-wheel-drive vehicles could be kept out of the park altogether, except for the boat launching area.

Extreme care should be taken to preserve as many of the existing trees on the site as possible. To supplement the existing trees and other plant material to be saved, additional plantings of native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous material should be made in accordance with a planting plan to enhance the natural character and beauty of the site while helping to blend the man-made construction with its surroundings. To encourage nature study, plant material, both existing and new, could be labeled for easy identification.

The potentials of this site are unlimited, offering a marvelous



opportunity for a unique recreation area for the City of New Bern, Craven County, and Eastern North Carolina.

The following two recreation areas fall in two categories. The first, Lawson Creek Park, is an existing park on which little physical development has occurred; and the second, the Bicentennial Park, is being proposed for the first time.

- 1) Lawson Creek Park - This area of approximately 140 acres is located on the Trent River immediately south of the center of New Bern and is separated from the City by Lawson Creek.

When the property was originally acquired by the City for future development as a park, the North Carolina D.O.T.'s Master Thoroughfare Plan showed a tentative location for U.S. 70 bypass through the park area. Since that time a definite location for the bypass was determined and the bypass has been constructed. Although this highway divides the property, this should not adversely affect the use of the park. Actually, the bypass serves to separate the passive and active recreation areas of the park. Pedestrian connections between the two areas are shown on the plan.

It is proposed that the entire park be developed in five stages, taking from three to five years to complete each increment.

Most of the tract was originally swamp land, but in recent years has been used as a land fill area. This operation is now terminated. It is proposed that the southwest portion be developed first, incorporating the suggestions indicated on the plan.

It is felt that a natural park area should be developed in New Bern where the flora and fauna can be observed and studied in natural surroundings. The entire park can serve as a bird sanctuary. It is proposed that

the first section of the park include an arboretum, and picnicking. The existing trees and undergrowth should be preserved in this area. Typical plants along paths should be identified by labels. A few plants indigenous to the area, but not found in the park, could be planted in this section. A network of paths should be constructed in this area so that park users can observe the plants at close range. Where swampy areas are encountered, the path should be constructed of wood planks anchored to pilings, to serve as a catwalk through the wet areas.

The second section is designed for camping and includes parking space, shelter, and a comfort station. The plant growth in this section should also be preserved.

The natural protected marina adjoining Lawson Creek will be the third section to be developed. It will include boat docks, slips, piers, launching ramps, maintenance shop, fuel dock, parking space, picnic areas, and overnight camping. The lagoon south of the highway should be dredged at this stage and the material used as necessary to accomplish the required fills in this area.

The fourth increment to be developed will include an open-air theater with a concert shell and theatrical stage, and a marina for sailboats. These facilities will be located in the northeast corner of the property. Proposed for inclusion with the marina are a sailing club and restaurant located on an existing peninsula ideally situated for this type of function. Also included with these features will be the required parking space, boat piers, boat ramp, boat storage, and pedestrian promenade overlooking the shore line. Adjacent to the boat ramp is a natural beach area which should be developed for swimming. It is further suggested that a strong vertical focal point be incorporated in the architectural

treatment of the sailing club and restaurant. This might conceivably take the form of a simulated ship's mast with "crow's nest", rigging and sail, a lookout tower, or a similar feature. Such a structure could become the dominant focal point for not only Lawson Creek Park but for a much larger area along the Trent and Neuse Rivers. Material from the lagoon dredging should also be used in this area.

The final stage will principally involve the development of the south central portion into a natural botanical garden around man-made lagoons, already dredged and the material used in the construction of previously constructed areas. Native aquatic plants, as well as other native plant material, should be planted in this area. Overlooks, open areas, and circulatory paths or catwalks are also included with this feature of the Park.

This area is the most delicate environmentally, and will require great care in development to preserve the swamp and reed grass. It is extremely important that the roads, paths, walkways, and lagoon edges be curvilinear rather than straight.

The potentials of this site are unique and when they have been fully realized, Lawson Creek Park will have much to offer the citizens of New Bern and the surrounding areas as well as visitors to the City.

- 2) Bicentennial Park - This area of 2.5 acres is a flat site with the Trent River on the south and the center of the New Bern business district three blocks to the north. The tract lies within an urban renewal area. The redevelopment plan for this area surrounding the park site proposes shops, parking, and a restaurant.

The design for this park has been dictated by the proximity of the site to the business district, the contiguous Trent River, and the proposed

future development contiguous to its north, west, and east boundaries.

The design encompasses three distinct and separate uses: a) the concourse or mall, b) the children's play area, and c) the outdoor theater.

Discussing these elements of the design in this same order:

- a) The concourse will serve to draw shoppers down Middle Street and to the future shops around the park. It will provide a relaxed atmosphere for shoppers as they stroll down the concourse, or rest on the benches provided. The gazebo or large arbor at the south end of the concourse, together with the existing flagpole and paved area, will serve as a strong focal point or terminus to the view down Middle Street. The concourse also will serve as a logical transitional element from the shops to the children's play area.
- b) The children's play area occupies about two-thirds of the area of the park. The design concept is based on the premise that mothers will bring their small children with them when they come to the central business district to shop. The playground will afford a place to bring their children to play while they are watched over by their mothers or by someone else, while the mothers shop. The physical design of this area was directed towards creating different levels by mounding of the earth, raised areas retained by log pilings driven in the ground, and by depressed areas, such as the spray pool and the apparatus area. One unique feature of the playground is the large precast concrete igloo.
- c) The outdoor theater in the southeast corner of the park is designed to accommodate from 900 to 1000 spectators in the seating area on land. In addition, boaters may anchor in the Trent River and view productions from that vantage point. Space is provided for dressing

rooms at each end of the stage. It is proposed that the supporting structure of the stage be constructed of heavy pressure treated timbers, and that the entire stage be built in place over the river bulkhead and adjacent land, without anchorage to pilings. It is envisioned that the theater could provide a wide variety of entertainment for the citizens of New Bern and the surrounding area.

In addition to the above elements of the plan, there is a paved area proposed at the southern edge of the park with shade trees, game tables, and benches. Also, a comfort station is provided in a central location.

There are two recreation facilities which have become obsolete for City recreation purposes. They are: 1) Kafer Park, and 2) Cedar Street Recreation Area. Appropriate disposition of these should be made by the City.

The National Guard Armory also should be removed from the Recreation Department's inventory of facilities. The building does have potential for use by civic groups, such as the Arts Council, and could possibly be converted into a fine arts center. However, no funds should be expended on this structure by the City for recreation purposes.

#### PLANNING FOR THE HANDICAPPED

At this point, it should be emphasized that all recreation facilities must be designed and constructed to accommodate the handicapped. As defined by the North Carolina State Building Code, "handicapped people are those in wheel-chairs, on crutches, with leg braces, or with sight, hearing, or coordination defects, or those who through aging, accident, or disease move with difficulty." The Code further states that: "It is the spirit and intent of the code requirements to provide these people full and free use of all buildings and facilities in the State so that they may have the education, employment, living, and

recreation opportunities necessary to be as self-sufficient as possible."

#### RECREATION FACILITIES MAP

The master plan for recreation in New Bern is best illustrated in map form on the following page. This map is a presentation of all public recreation areas in the urban area, both existing and proposed. In other words, the master plan for recreation is the culmination of recreational land use planning activities for the City. Orderly growth of the City's recreation system can best be obtained by adhering to the master plan as closely as possible.

#### ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION, AND PERSONNEL FOR PUBLIC RECREATION

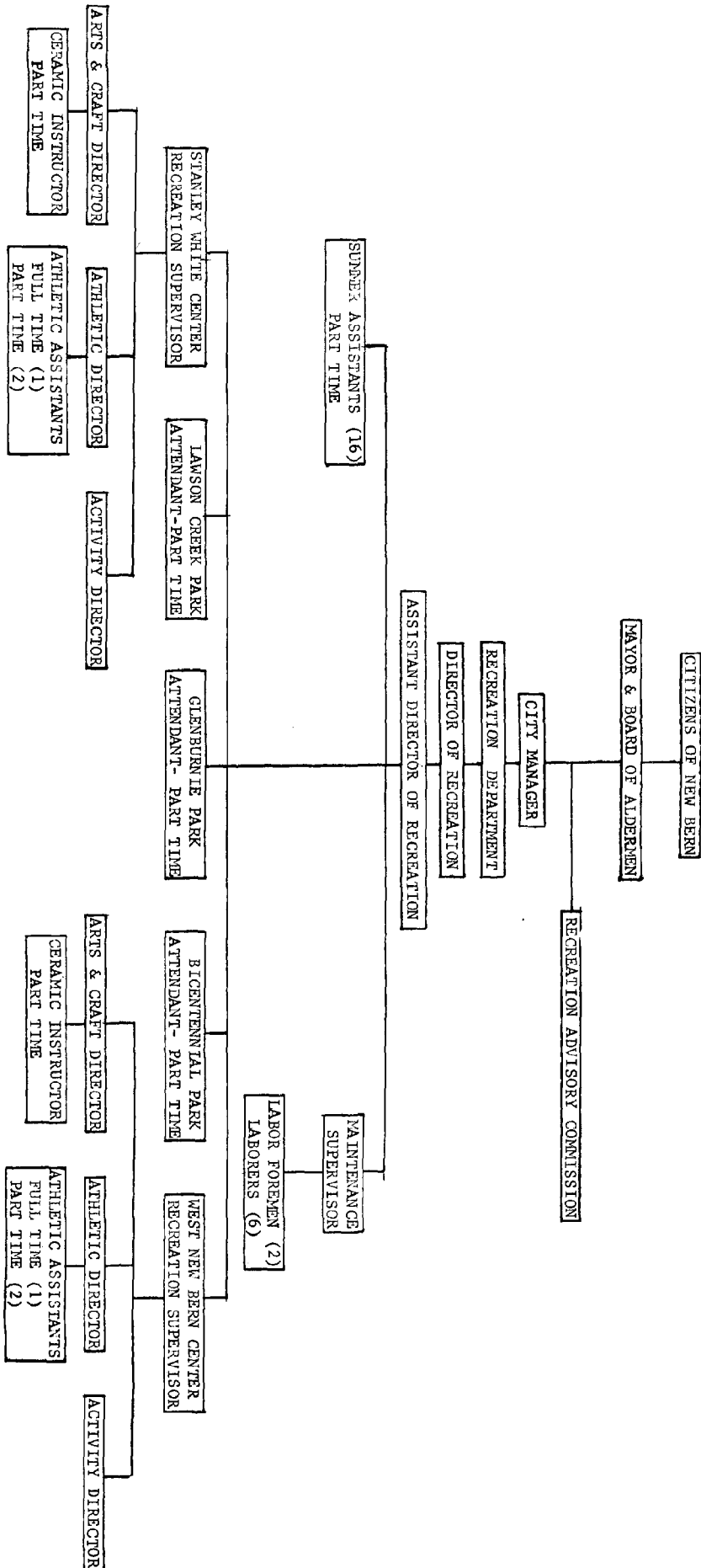
The inventory and evaluation of public recreation resources in Chapter Four pointed out needs with respect to the organization, administration, and personnel of the City's recreation program. The following recommendations are submitted to satisfy these needs:

Begin immediately to rearrange and supplement the organizational structure of the City Recreation Department according to the planning period organizational chart on the following page. This action will require the following:

- 1) Reduction of the number of recreation personnel directly responsible to the City Recreation Director.
- 2) Establishment of a full-time secretarial position.
- 3) Establishing the position of Assistant Director of Recreation.
- 4) Providing office space for the City Recreation Director and the Assistant Director of Recreation in the City Hall in proper recognition of the administrative responsibilities of these positions.

PLANNING PERIOD

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# COASTAL ZONE INFORMATION CENTER



This report was financed in part by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the State of North Carolina, and meets the requirements of the North Carolina Coastal Area Management Act of 1974.

